

B.C. AGRIFOODS


a strategy for growth



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Ministry of
Agriculture





*“Good, nutritious
foods are essential
for strong, healthy
families.”*



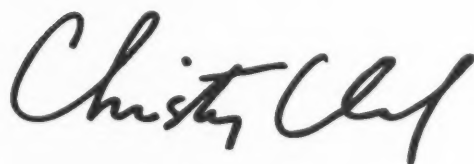
*“This is our plan
to ensure food
production in B.C.
will continue to grow
and support valuable
jobs and healthy
communities.”*

MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

I am very pleased to present *BC Agrifoods: A Strategy for Growth* as part of *Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan*. This new, five-year strategy builds on our world-wide reputation for producing innovative, high quality and great-tasting foods. With enormous potential for growth, our agrifoods sector is a natural choice to be highlighted in our jobs plan as a source of new dollars into our economy.

British Columbia is Canada's gateway to the Pacific and so as part of this strategy we'll be leveraging our access to Asia, with particular focus on emerging markets like India, China and Korea. B.C.'s reputation as a global leader in seafood production is already being recognized in China, where I met with buyers during my November 2011 trade mission. I look forward to many more of our locally-produced foods being exported to this important market.

The priorities and actions set out in this strategy will provide a globally competitive path for the agrifoods sector. Going forward, this will drive the development of new products, markets and job opportunities for British Columbians.



The Honourable Christy Clark
Premier of British Columbia



*Honourable Christy Clark
Premier of British Columbia*

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

The BC Jobs Plan Agrifoods Strategy is a five-year strategic plan that sets out actions in three key areas of priority: to focus on high quality and high value products; expand domestic and international markets; and enhance the industry's competitiveness.

BC agrifoods already have a worldwide reputation for high quality and value. By encouraging innovation and enhancing food safety protocols, we will help producers and processors turn their hard work into profitable and sustainable operations.

In recent years we have successfully expanded our export markets. *The Agrifoods Strategy* allows us to continue to work with industry from the well established supply management sectors to emerging new commodity groups to leverage and promote our existing strengths in order to increase demand, thereby growing and diversifying our domestic and export markets. We have consulted extensively with industry stakeholders to get their input on original and creative ideas that will increase their competitiveness. From the traditional family farm to vineyards, fisheries, cattle ranches, high-tech greenhouses and state-of-the-art processing facilities, BC's agrifoods sector will play its part in generating new jobs, stimulating investment and inciting growth across the province.



*Honourable Don McRae
Minister of Agriculture*

A stylized, handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D. McRae'.

The Honourable Don McRae
Minister of Agriculture

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SUMMARY OF KEY GOALS

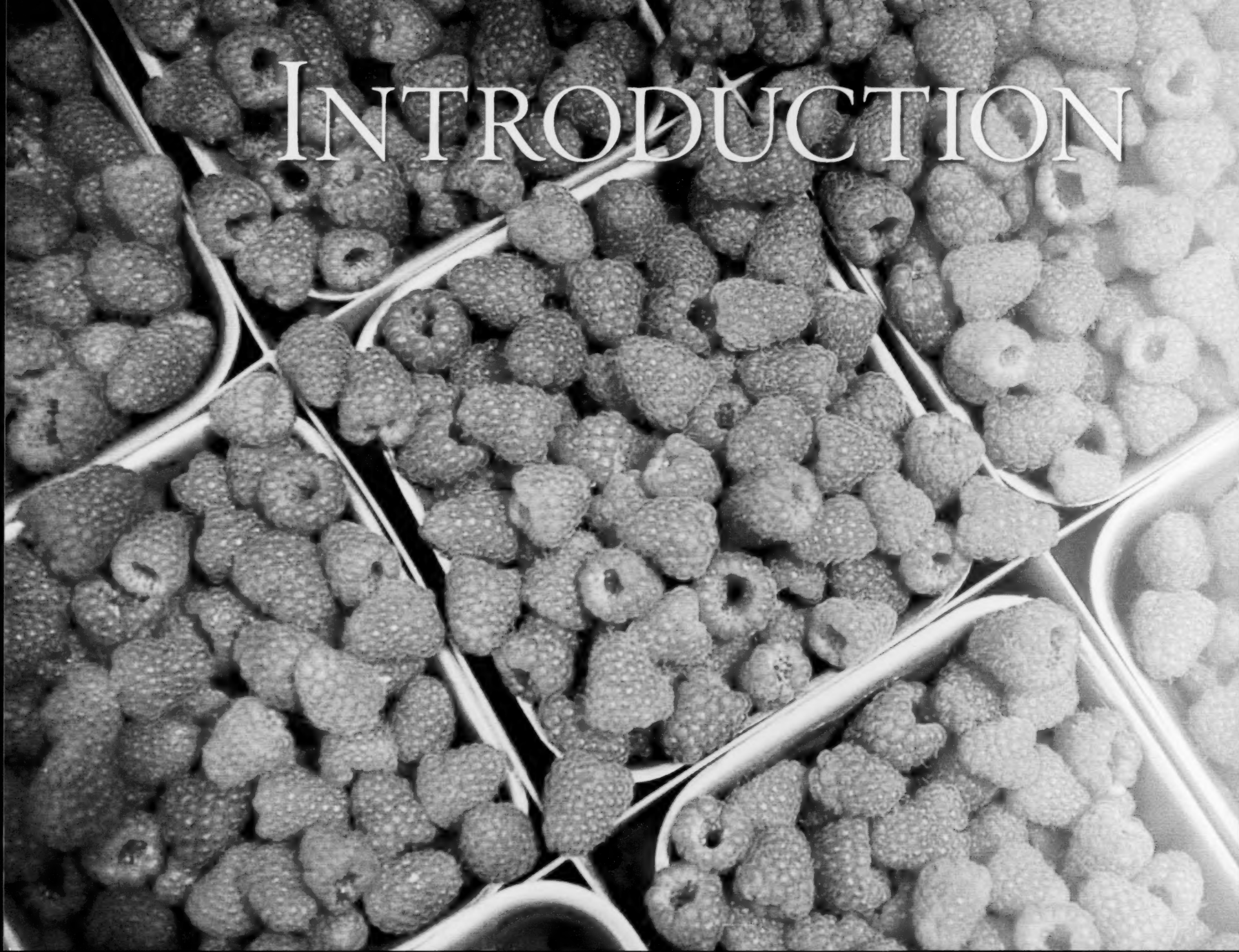
The BC Jobs Plan Agrifoods Strategy articulates a vision and goals to guide the further development of B.C.'s agrifoods sector, which provides more than 61,000 jobs and generates close to \$10.5 billion a year in provincial revenues.

THE VISION: An innovative, adaptive, globally competitive agrifoods sector valued by all British Columbians. The target is \$14 billion a year in B.C. agrifoods revenue by 2017. To achieve this, the strategy commits the Province to seven goals supporting the following three priorities:

	High-quality, high-value products	Domestic and international markets	Competitiveness
GOALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure a safe, secure food supply ▪ Advance the development of innovative products and processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthen domestic markets ▪ Expand international markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grow B.C.'s agrifoods advantage ▪ Secure a strong future for farming ▪ Provide a sustainable land base for production



INTRODUCTION



THE AGRIFOODS SECTOR is critical to B.C.'s future growth and development. That's why it's among the eight sectors singled out for special focus in *the BC Jobs Plan*. *The BC Jobs Plan* is built on three pillars – enabling job creation, getting goods to market and expanding markets – supported by a series of targeted strategies to generate growth in economic sectors where the province has proven strengths and untapped potential.

This document sets out the Jobs Plan strategy for B.C.'s agrifoods sector, which provides more than 61,000 jobs and generates close to \$10.5 billion a year in provincial revenues. B.C. has the most diverse agrifoods industry in Canada, producing more than 200 agriculture commodities and 100 seafood species. In addition, the province has more than 1,400 processing businesses, producing a variety of foods and beverages, from fruit juices and artisan beers to specialty pet foods and wild botanicals.

This diversity provides an important competitive advantage with a wide range of opportunities for growth and innovation.

To help the sector advance these opportunities, this *BC Jobs Plan Agrifoods Strategy* will focus on three key priorities:

1. Focus on high-quality, high-value products
2. Expand domestic and international markets
3. Enhance the agrifoods sector's competitiveness

JOBS IN AGRIFOODS

Running a successful farm has always demanded a broad range of skills and abilities. Historically, many of these were learned on the job and passed along informally in families and communities.

These days, scientists, technicians, analysts, brokers, architects, designers and engineers are just some of the highly-trained professionals building careers in the agrifoods sector. To learn more, go to <http://www.aipc.ca/bc/index.php?page=career-opportunities>

AGRIFOODS

Farming will always be the heart of food production, but B.C.'s modern agrifoods sector includes a wide array of products – from basic edibles like dairy, beef, shellfish and poultry to value-added products like wines, sturgeon caviar and pet foods, all the way through to non-edibles including flowers, cosmetics and textiles. As the sector continues to diversify, we're also seeing growth in areas such as agri-tourism, nutraceuticals, forest botanicals and biofuels – with more products likely to emerge in the future.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

B.C.'s AGRIFOODS ADVANTAGE

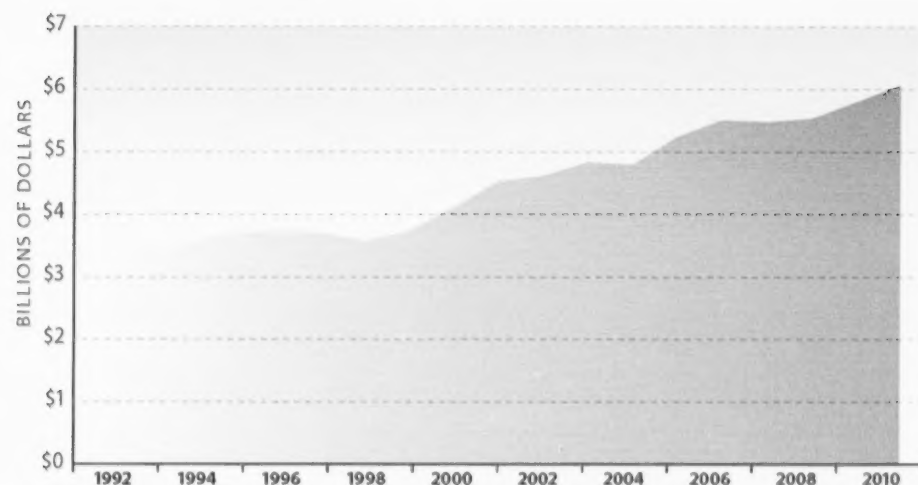
By 2030, Canada will be one of only a handful of countries exporting more food than it imports. That means growing opportunities for B.C.

- ✦ The province is recognized globally for its high-quality food safety standards.
- ✦ Markets in the U.S. and the U.K. are well established. Whereas, markets in China, South Korea and India are emerging.
- ✦ Shipping costs are lower, due to our proximity to Asia.
- ✦ Our agrifoods sector is adaptable and resilient with a modern infrastructure.
- ✦ It's also the most diverse in Canada with over 200 agriculture and 100 seafood species, a world-renowned wine industry and a growing array of high-quality, high-value niche products.

AGRIFOODS IS A sector in transition, with new opportunities emerging on, and beyond, traditional family farms and fishing. Primary production – in areas including beef, dairy, fruit, grains and seafood – will always be a critical foundation for the industry. At the same time, a new generation of innovative growers and producers is breaking new ground, focusing on high-quality, value-added products and exploring niche markets at home and abroad.

With our diverse and growing array of agrifoods products; our international reputation for high food safety standards; our favourable location, lower shipping costs and well-established ties to Asia-Pacific markets, B.C.'s agrifoods sector is well positioned for growth and investment, taking into account the following trends, opportunities and challenges.

B.C. Food Production Trend



The above graph shows the value of food and beverage manufacturing shipments.

Growth in global food and feed demand

Global population growth, rising incomes, climate change and other factors are driving demand for agrifoods products in countries around the world. Markets in emerging economies, such as China and India, are growing quickly while rising incomes are leading to increased demand for higher-value products such as meats and processed foods.

In this environment, many countries face significant challenges in meeting their domestic needs, let alone producing food for export, and this trend is expected to continue.

That means growing opportunity for B.C.'s agrifoods sector. Our products are already in demand around the world as a trusted and tasty source of quality nutrition. In the

coming years, that reputation will become an even more important competitive advantage.

Growing focus on health and buying locally

British Columbians are becoming increasingly aware of the benefits of healthy living for their families, and for the environment. Demand is growing for fresh, local foods from sustainable sources, supported by made-in-B.C. trends such as the 100 Mile Diet (Alisa Smith, J.B. MacKinnon 2007).

Since 2000, the number of local farmers' markets around the province has more than doubled, with each market providing a bounty of local foods. As this trend continues gaining traction, B.C.'s agrifoods producers will have more opportunities to supply fresh, healthy food directly to consumers.



Increasing innovation

Innovation is a key to creating and retaining jobs in every sector, and for improving our standard of living. Within agrifoods, innovation is ongoing, ranging from improved manufacturing techniques that increase efficiency to more fundamental changes in production, such as the use of anaerobic digestors to convert agricultural byproducts into energy.

As the sector becomes increasingly specialized, innovation will continue to drive the development of new products, markets and job opportunities.

Protecting the land base for food production

Much of B.C.'s most productive farmland is close to urban areas and other types of development. This can lead to tensions over odor, noise and dust concerns, competing demands for finite resources and pressures from other sectors to use agricultural lands. Recognizing how these issues affect the sector's viability, this strategy reinforces the importance of proper planning for agriculture in communities throughout B.C.

To really assist farm families and enhance the sector's overall sustainability, B.C.'s highly fertile food producing lands need protection. Recent legislative changes to strengthen the Agricultural Land Reserve and the Agricultural Land Commission aim to do just that.

Exchange rates and energy costs

Over the past several years, B.C.'s agrifoods industry has faced significant challenges to its competitiveness and profitability. A stronger Canadian dollar and the rising costs of energy and other inputs have all placed downward pressure on sector incomes. The agriculture and seafood industries also serve international markets where competitors with similar or lower cost structures enjoy greater economies of scale and create downward pressure on prices.

Despite these challenges, the agrifoods industry is showing steady growth in revenues and total employment, while the broader agrifoods sector continues to diversify and build on B.C.'s competitive advantages.



Multi-level partnerships

Canada's provincial and federal governments share responsibility for managing and regulating the country's agrifoods sector. In B.C., the Province and the industry receive considerable financial support from federal cost-shared programs, many of which are set out in the Growing Forward agreement, a national framework that coordinates federal-provincial-territorial agriculture policy. In fisheries, provincial agencies collaborate with multiple federal agencies and counterparts.

The sector is also supported by inter-agency partnerships such as those with the Agricultural Land Commission and the B.C. Farm Industry Review Board, a statutory body that administers the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act* and oversees the work of commodity boards and commissions. These partnerships provide a solid base for the sector's future growth and development.

Did You Know?

Most B.C. farms – 98 per cent – are family owned and operated.

B.C. has 30 million hectares of Crown range, which is equivalent to the size of Labrador. This shared resource provides valuable forage for beef and sheep production.

GROWING FORWARD

Growing Forward is a national framework that coordinates federal-provincial-territorial agriculture policy. Under the current five-year framework, which expires in 2013, governments are delivering \$475 million to provide income stability and loss insurance to B.C. farmers. An additional \$78 million is being invested in programs designed to improve competitiveness and profitability.

The Province is working with stakeholders to identify issues and opportunities that can be addressed and leveraged in Growing Forward II. B.C.'s key priorities include strategic investments in innovation, environmental sustainability and market expansion.



THE STRATEGY



Vision: An innovative, adaptive, globally competitive agrifood sector valued by all British Columbians

Target: B.C. agrifoods revenue of \$14 billion a year by 2017.

PRIORITIES

1. Focus on high-quality, high-value products
2. Expand domestic and international markets
3. Enhance the agrifood sector's competitiveness

BUILDING ON THE BC AGRICULTURE PLAN

In 2006, the Province consulted with a wide range of stakeholders to focus on the best ways to advance the agriculture industry. That work led to "The B.C. Agriculture Plan: Growing a Healthy Future for B.C. Families," which recommended 69 actions to guide the work of government and industry through 2011.

Since its release in 2008, B.C. has delivered on over 90 per cent of the actions. We are now moving forward to support the next phase of industry development.

This *BC Jobs Plan Agrifoods Strategy* focuses on job creation and economic development, recognizing the Province's competitive advantage as a trusted producer of high-quality foods, beverages and, increasingly, high-value niche-market products. It sets out priorities and actions to guide the agrifoods sector's growth in 2012 and beyond.



1. FOCUS ON HIGH-QUALITY, HIGH-VALUE PRODUCTS

ENSURE A SAFE, SECURE FOOD SUPPLY

IN THE AGRIFOODS sector, our food safety systems amount to a competitive advantage, given concerns about food-borne illness in products from some jurisdictions. Further, our Environmental Farm Plan program gives assurances that our farmers are doing their very best to keep B.C. air and water clean.

B.C. products are widely seen as safe and secure and that makes them more attractive in many markets, including the fast-growing economies of the Asia Pacific. For example, our dairy, poultry, beef and seafood products are safer than ever, thanks to our strict and stringent safety protocols. And many of our food products have a reputation for building health and vitality.

With this strategy, the Province is building on these B.C. advantages by moving forward with the following food safety initiatives:

Achieving full traceability for livestock and seafood

In recent years, traceability – tracking a product from its source through to its final destination in the marketplace – has become a vital issue for the agrifoods sector. It responds to growing consumer demands for information about where, when and how foods are produced. It also plays a critical role in preventing and containing the spread of food-borne illness.

With this strategy, the Province is committing to support an integrated national traceability system, in partnership with federal agencies.

ACTION

- * *Support implementation of a traceability system for B.C. livestock and a pilot for B.C. seafood*
- * *Implement a premise identification system to support traceability for livestock and poultry*

Developing a new animal health framework

Animal health management is important to farmers and ranchers. It can also affect human health if diseases are passed from animals to people. Recognizing the need for action in this important area, the Province began a review of existing animal health legislation and policy in 2010. The review included consultations with the agriculture industry, veterinarians and others on the front lines of animal health management. The general public also provided ideas and recommendations. Guided by the findings of the consultation process, the Province is developing a

framework that safeguards animal and human health, and the economic well-being of B.C. farmers and ranchers. The framework will include updates to B.C.'s central animal health statute, the *Animal Disease Control Act*, which was developed more than 50 years ago.

ACTION

- * *Deliver new animal health framework*
- * *Develop targeted disease control programs*

Enhancing Food Safety

Food safety is a critical component of a thriving agrifoods sector. The Province works closely with the federal government,

producers, processors and others in the sector to safeguard public health by ensuring our products meet the highest standards for quality and safety. B.C.'s strong regulatory framework promotes consumer confidence and helps to set our products apart in international markets. Continuous improvement and refinement are essential to maintaining B.C.'s advantage in this area.

ACTION

- * *Fund the food industry to continuously improve food safety practices*

ADVANCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS AND PROCESSES

PARTNERS IN INNOVATION

The Canada-BC Agri-Innovation Program was launched in 2011, as part of the Growing Forward agreement. It provides funding for innovative projects that enhance profitability and competitiveness, both on-farm and throughout the rest of the supply chain. For details, go to <http://www.iafbc.ca/agri-innovation.htm>

Developing a sector-wide innovation strategy

Innovation is critical to enhancing competitiveness and the Province is working to develop a strategy to increase innovation across the agrifoods sector. An Innovation Advisory Committee was formed in 2011 to get more people and organizations involved in developing relevant policies and programs. B.C.'s priorities for advancing innovation include building collaboration across industry, government and academia; enhancing cutting edge research to improve the quality and marketability of B.C. products; helping

entrepreneurs develop new businesses and market innovations; and supporting the sector's participation in energy and carbon efficiency, renewable energy and bioproducts development.

ACTION

- * *Finalize the B.C. Strategy for Innovation in Agriculture*
- * *Increase innovation capacity in the B.C. agrifoods sector*

BC's FOOD INNOVATION CENTRE:

Funded through the federal-provincial-territorial Growing Forward agreement, the Food Innovation Centre of BC was established to enhance product innovation and commercialization opportunities for the province's food processing, natural health products and consumer bio-products sectors.

The centre provides one-window access to a network of professionals and companies with the insight, advice and valued solutions B.C. producers and processors want. For more on the centre, go to <http://www.foodinnovationcentre.ca/>

Did You Know?

Food and beverage processing is the largest manufacturing industry in the province, generating sales of \$7.2 billion in B.C. in 2010 and providing 27,300 jobs.

Adding value from farm to fork

Value is subjective and can be measured – and captured – in a number of ways. When it comes to food production, the ultimate measure of value is often determined by consumers. But value can be gained (or lost) at any point along the way, from growing through to processing, shipping and marketing.

That full range of activities is captured by the value chain, which brings together farmers, fishers, processors, shippers and others to identify ways to add value at any step along the way. For example B.C.'s Potato Value Chain pilot project, launched in 2010, works broadly with the industry and culinary arts programs to identify and evaluate a range

of potato varieties – testing them for field performance as well as suitability for use in a variety of value-added products.

To further support the development of agrifoods value chains, the Province will work with producers and processors to build new relationships and develop the high-quality, distinctive products increasingly demanded by the marketplace.

ACTION

- * *Work with industry to identify new value chain opportunities and share value chain information*
- * *Help industry take advantage of new and emerging consumer trends*





ADDING VALUE ON THE FAMILY FARM

Nancy and Clarke Gourlay and their three sons started milking cows and making cheese on Vancouver Island in 2001. Today they have three generations operating three thriving businesses—Morningside Farm, Little Qualicum Cheeseworks, and the MooBerry Winery. The businesses combine a working farm with value-added artisan food and wine production, along with agri-tourism activities such as farm tours.

To learn more, go to
<http://www.morningstarfarm.ca/>



Enhancing Organic Market Access

With growing interest in healthy eating, consumers are increasingly seeking out organic foods – and many producers are pursuing, and achieving, certified organic status, which requires significant time and resources. For any type of soil-based farming operation organic growers must abstain from using certain inputs and follow management practices, as described by the organic standard for 36 months, in order to obtain certification.

With this substantive investment up front, producers have to plan for the long term and many would likely benefit from a value chain process, supporting the development of high-quality, premium-priced products.

ACTION

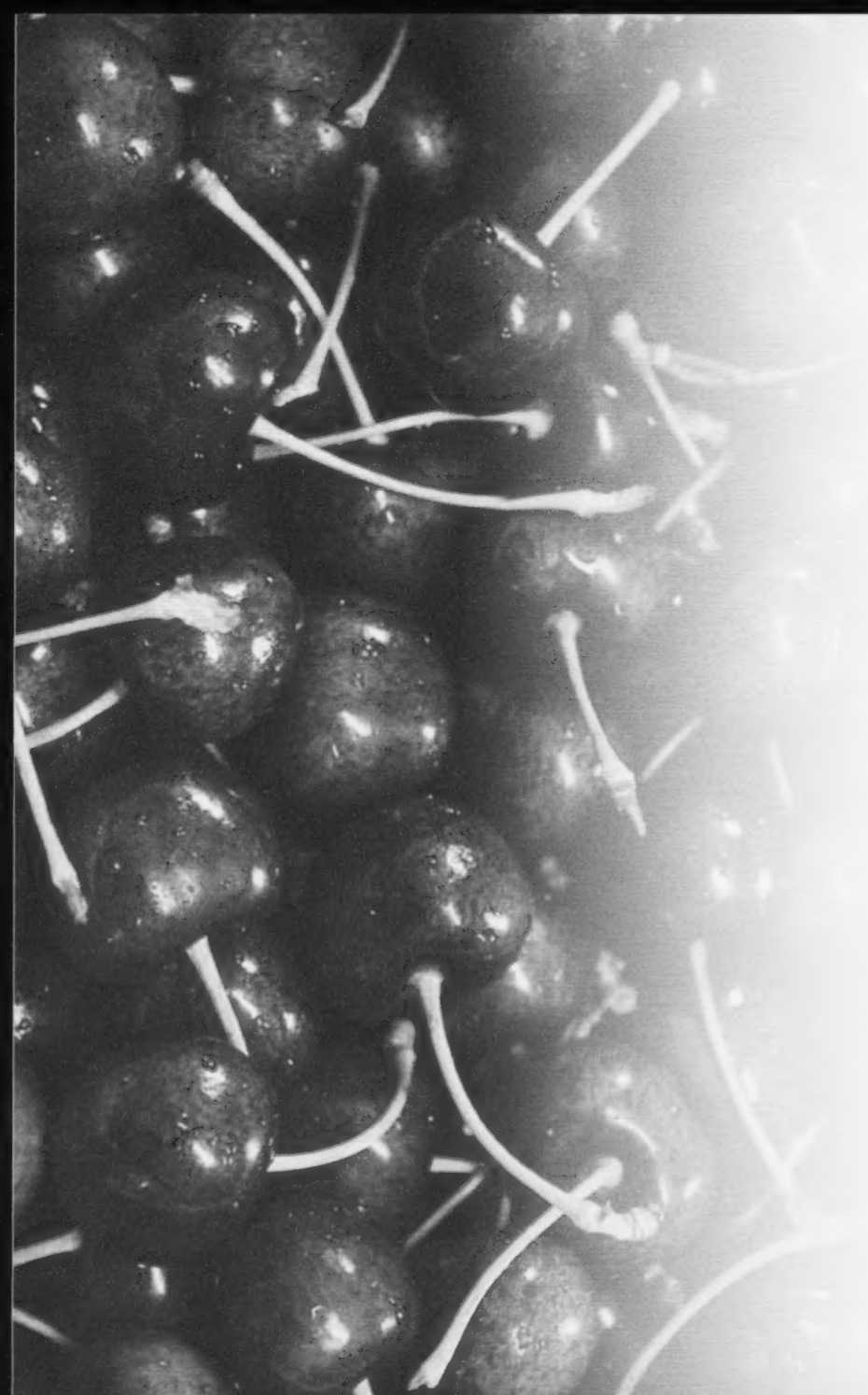
- * *Increase organic sector capacity in value chains in order to capitalize on market opportunities*



MAKING LOCAL CONNECTIONS

Most B.C. farms – 98 per cent – are family owned and operated. So, when we support them, we don't just get fresh, nutritious foods. We also help to build strong, sustainable communities – and to build the workforce B.C. needs for its future.

For example, the Province supports 4-H programs that help young people build life skills and jobs skills, guiding them to successful careers in agriculture and beyond, while provincial support for fairs and exhibitions helps to link shoppers and farmers and spotlight agrifoods career opportunities. A trip to the fair can be the first step for young people in taking the lead as the next generation of growers and producers.



2. EXPAND DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

B.C.'S AGRIFOODS SECTOR is in a good position to substantially increase both its domestic and export markets. With strong transportation and communication infrastructure, established supporting industries, abundant natural resources, a diversified agrifoods base, and our strategic Pacific Rim location, the sector has significant potential for expansion.

The Ministry of Agriculture has developed a three-year market development plan to help build markets for our agrifoods products at home and abroad. The plan will be a key part of implementing this strategy.

Did you know?

In 2010, B.C. producers generated over \$686 million in farm sales from the production of over 50 different types of fruits and vegetables.

STRENGTHEN DOMESTIC MARKETS

In earlier times, British Columbians were mostly self-reliant when it came to foods. Out of necessity, they grew, raised, hunted, caught or foraged for most of what was in their daily diets. Today, approximately 50 per cent of the foods we eat are imported. And, while that adds variety and choice, it also represents an enormous opportunity for B.C. producers. To make the most of that opportunity, the Province is acting in the following areas:

Promoting B.C. foods

As part of this strategy, the Province is developing a new, interactive initiative to encourage retailers, chefs and consumers to buy more local agrifoods products.

A FoodsBC Facebook page was launched in early 2012, serving as the hub for other types of social media. A FoodsBC Twitter account shares information with a much broader audience.

Ministry of Agriculture staff keep the FoodsBC Facebook wall active with photos, recipes and product information from other B.C. food sites, including *BCSeafood.ca* and *healthyfamiliesbc.ca*, which offer select sector information, recipes and health information. For the first time, B.C. will now have a single, centralized source for up-to-date information on fresh, local food products.

ACTION

- * *Promote local foods in partnership with industry and other organizations, including the Ministries of Health, Education and Jobs Tourism and Innovation*
- * *Work with industry to develop a new promotional campaign for B.C. beef*

Did you know?

B.C. is Canada's largest producer of blueberries, raspberries and sweet cherries by volume. We also lead the nation in cranberry sales, even though we're second in terms of production. This underlines the importance of emphasizing value – not just volume – in agrifoods production.



Expanding B.C. Seafood Marketing

The BC Seafood Market Exchange links buyers from around the world directly with B.C. seafood companies. Developed by the Province in partnership with the B.C. Seafood Alliance, the exchange is currently expanding to support further growth and market development.

Its user-friendly, searchable company database is used around the world by trade commissioners and buyers. The exchange also offers consumer-level information including recipes, fact sheets and nutritional analyses. The next stage of development will allow for an online presence connecting buyers and fishers for fresh sales at docks, further encouraging the growth of local and international markets. Go to: www.bcseafood.ca

ACTION

- * *Finalize development of the Seafood Market Exchange*



Building B.C. Agrifoods Connections

AgriFoodBC is a web services platform (<http://www.agrifoodbc.ca/>). Its purpose is to help the agrifoods sector increase their use of web tools with the help of a web support agent. AgriFoodBC also provides a central web-based arena for producers, processors and academia to share information and create linkages to address food production challenges, strengthen the industry and help create jobs for British Columbians. This positions the agrifoods sector to use modern communications tools to expand the sector and support the creation of new businesses as new opportunities emerge.

ACTION

- * *Enable the agrifoods sector to build their business through new web based technologies*

Did You Know?

B.C. produces enough wine every year to fill nearly 15 million bottles. Placed end to end, they would stretch from Vancouver to Toronto.

Expanding opportunities for B.C. wine

B.C. wines are enjoyed around the world and consistently rank among the best in international competitions. In 2011 alone they won more than 1,000 awards and, with a growing reputation for excellence, they are coveted by buyers in a long list of jurisdictions, including other Canadian provinces.

However, here at home, liquor laws restrict wine shipments across provincial boundaries. Under the federal Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act, passed in 1928, alcohol cannot be shipped across provincial borders without going through the receiving province's liquor

board. That means visitors from other parts of Canada can't buy wine from B.C. vintners and take it home for their personal use. With more than 700 vineyards, the industry produces a wide range of products and regularly wins international awards. The Province will work with its counterparts across the country to open new domestic markets to B.C. wines.

ACTION

- * *Work to ensure that consumers across Canada can access wines from all producing regions of our province*
- * *Investigate co-marketing opportunities between sectors (e.g., seafood and wine)*

EXPAND INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

B.C. agriculture, fish and seafood products are enjoyed in nearly every corner of the Earth. In 2010, we exported \$2.5 billion worth of food to 135 countries.

With growth in global food demand, a strong reputation for food safety and well-established ties to fast growing markets, B.C. has a strong foundation for building international sales. As part of this strategy, the Province will increase promotion of B.C. exports abroad and work with producers to help them enter or expand their international markets.

Building export market readiness

Entering the export market takes a lot of planning. Producers need to know their markets, understand the competitive environment and manage a long list of issues in areas including legal, financial, human-resource and transportation arrangements.

To help more B.C. businesses enter or expand their operations in global markets, the Province is delivering a series of export readiness seminars, beginning in 2012.

The seminars will include marketing, information and educational programs to improve B.C.'s performance in key markets and emerging countries, supporting the

Ministry of Agriculture's broader market development strategy.

ACTION

- * *Deliver export readiness seminars*
- * *Improve export market intelligence*
- * *Support industry associations to provide outreach on market trends, processing and commercialization infrastructure*
- * *Capitalize on unique transportation requirements for B.C. agrifoods exports, as part of the expanding Canada Pacific Gateway*



TRADITIONAL TERRITORY, INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

First Nations farms exist in every region of the province, from cattle ranches in the Interior to vineyards in the Okanagan and organic market gardens on the coast. The Ministry of Agriculture works closely with First Nations farmers and fishers in order to realise and grow opportunities in agrifoods.

For example, Pentlatch Seafoods is owned and operated by the K'ómoks First Nation on Vancouver Island. They started growing shellfish after intense research within the waters of their traditional territory. They then developed a robust environmental stewardship program, followed by training to learn every aspect of the shellfish aquaculture business. Today, Pentlatch Seafoods has more than 20 employees, produces over two million oysters a year and serves markets including Taiwan, China and the United States. In the future, it plans to broaden production to include additional shellfish species. For more information, go to <http://komogway.com/>

Another success story is the Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation in the South Cariboo region. They are building a self-sustaining enterprise to produce fresh vegetables for the local community and beyond. Clear vision, strong community will and support from Government and private partners enabled the creation of a new community garden in 2011. Produce from this garden was sold to the local community, retailers, restaurants, logging camps and local farmers markets in the region.



Courtesy: Marine Harvest Canada

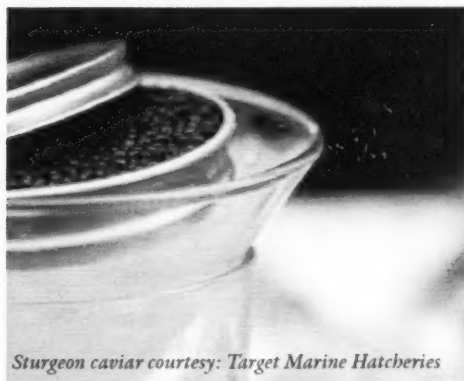
Did You Know?

British Columbia's seafood industry has a combined wholesale value of \$1.4 billion.

B.C. seafood was served in approximately two billion meals in 74 countries.

B.C. seafood provides 12,000 jobs, most of which provide stable, skilled and well paid employment in rural communities.

"The world comes seafood shopping in Brussels for a few days every year, and our goal is to have B.C. salmon on their shopping list."



Sturgeon caviar courtesy: Target Marine Hatcheries

DOUBLE-DIGIT GROWTH EXPECTED IN SEAFOOD SALES TO CHINA

In the fall of 2011, B.C. led its latest seafood trade mission to China, taking part in the massive Fisheries and Seafood Show in Qingdao—the world's second largest in terms of attendance—and building business relationships with buyers and investors in Guangzhou. Although it's difficult for companies to estimate the impact on their future business, the Province expects agrifoods exports to China will increase by at least 10 per cent in the year ahead.



Leading trade missions

Commercial relations and government-to-government ties are closely connected in many Asia-Pacific markets and frequent visits by government leaders send an important signal about B.C.'s commitment to building commercial ties.

As part of this strategy, the Province will continue to build and strengthen trade relationships with other countries and showcase B.C.'s agriculture, food and seafood products.

ACTION

- * *Lead a Trade Mission to Asia*
- * *Support outbound and incoming trade and buyers' missions*
- * *Finalize market access issues for beef and cherries*

BC SALMON MARKETING COUNCIL CHAIR

Promoting B.C. products abroad

B.C.'s agrifoods industry is fuelled in part by promotions at major international trade shows, and through focused marketing efforts to increase demand in other countries. Government involvement allows smaller companies to share in the global spotlight without the significant costs involved in working on their own.

As part of this strategy, the Province will continue to showcase B.C. products at the biggest seafood shows in the world: the European Seafood Exhibition and the China Fisheries and Seafood Exhibition. It will also undertake a number of actions to promote B.C. berries, wine and beef, all of which already enjoy strong demand in global markets.

ACTION

- * *Support B.C. companies at international seafood shows*
- * *Continue the campaign to expand domestic and international markets for berries*
- * *Identify export opportunities for B.C. wines, including the Wines of BC marketing campaign with the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation*
- * *Ensure that there are B.C. agrifoods trade specialists in international offices in key markets*

3. COMPETITIVENESS

GROW B.C.'S AGRIFOODS ADVANTAGE

British Columbia produces some of the best, most nutritious food anywhere on Earth, and we want to help our farmers compete even more effectively in the global marketplace. With this strategy, we are taking the following steps:

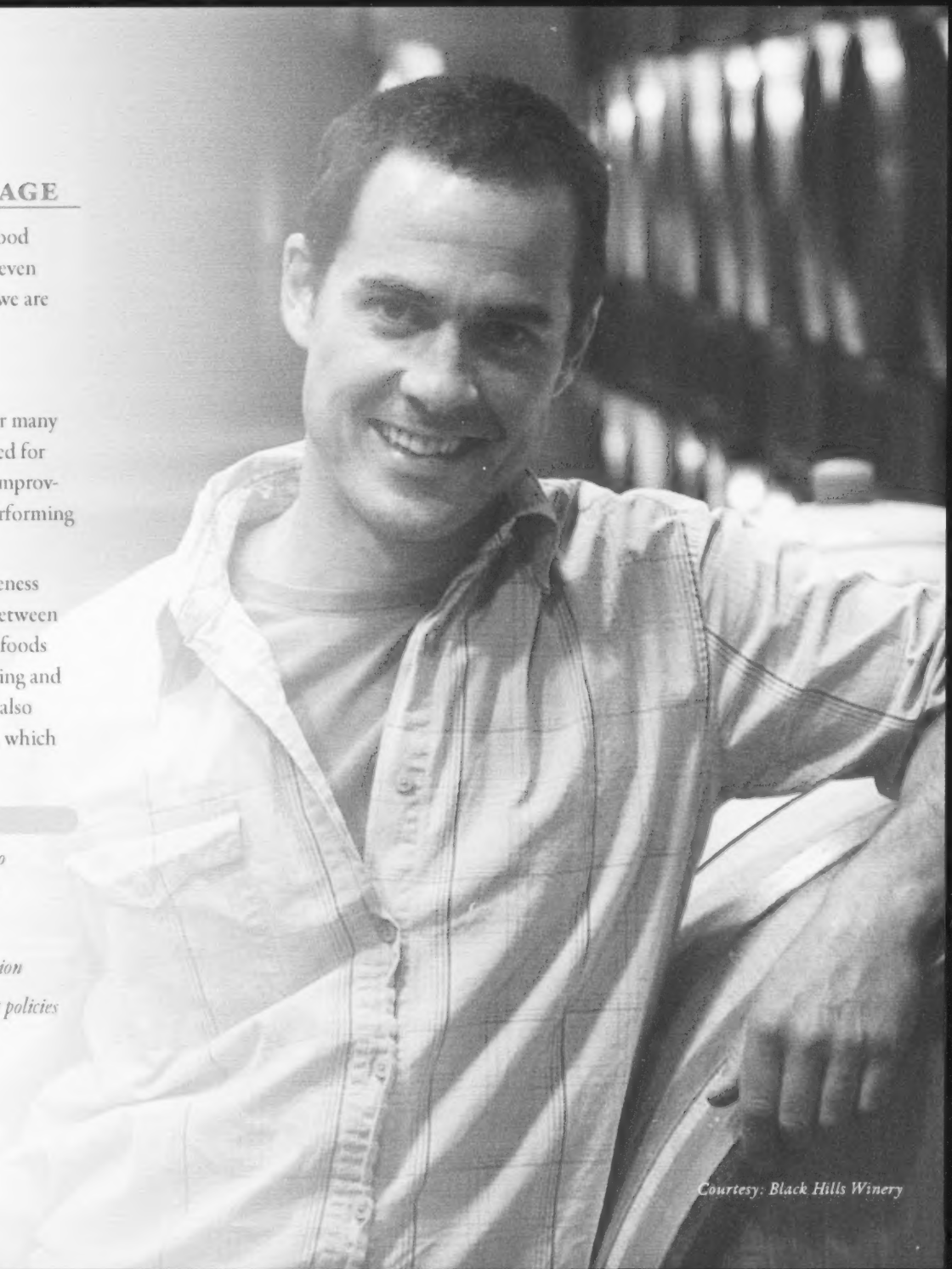
Enhancing sector competitiveness

GLOBAL MARKETS PLAY a large part in determining prices for many of B.C.'s agriculture and food products. This underlines the need for cost-competitive approaches which include controlling costs, improving product attributes, accessing markets efficiently and out-performing others in those markets.

As part of this strategy, the Province will convene a competitiveness committee, made up of sector leaders, to facilitate a dialogue between government and industry regarding ways to make the B.C. agrifoods sector more competitive. The committee will focus on identifying and addressing barriers in areas such as taxes and regulation. It will also establish a mechanism to measure profitability and set a target, which the Province and industry will work together to achieve.

ACTION

- * *Establish a competitiveness committee with a mandate to report to the Minister of Agriculture within one year from its first meeting*
- * *Develop a target for profitability in the agriculture sector*
- * *Increase production efficiency for product processing and distribution*
- * *Provide relief for farm property tax by reviewing farm assessment policies*
- * *Work with the Federal Government to add four new vegetable commodities under the Acreage Loss Program*



Courtesy: Black Hills Winery



B.C. greenhouse peppers

Minimizing regulatory barriers to growth

In areas such as agrifoods, which directly affect both human health and the health of our environment, regulations are essential to ensure safety and quality. At the same time, excessive regulation can be a barrier to business success.

Government is aware of sector wide issues and will continue to work with all areas of industry to address these challenges. Further to this, the Province has launched focused reviews of the regulations governing three key agrifoods industries – ranching, tree fruits and the greenhouse sector – seeking ways to help them become more competitive. The goal is not simply to reduce regulation, but to minimize

barriers to competitiveness and make sure requirements are scale and risk appropriate.

ACTION

- * *Complete the regulatory review of ranching*
- * *Complete the regulatory review of the tree fruit sector*
- * *Provide relief to offset the cost of the carbon tax and act on opportunities identified in the BC Jobs Plan Greenhouse Sector Special Report*

Address the sector's labour-market needs

Like every other sector of the B.C. economy, agrifoods production is affected by our ageing population and growing competition for a finite pool of experienced, skilled employees.

To help ensure a strong, sustainable industry in the years ahead, we are taking action in two key areas:

Given the shortage of skilled, trained labour across the B.C. agrifoods sector, it is imperative that farm managers develop skills for attracting workers, training them for the jobs at hand and supporting them to acquire additional knowledge and experience. The Province will help by developing a Human Resource Handbook with tools and information to assist farmers to effectively recruit, manage and maintain the workforces they need.

British Columbia has a number of programs designed to meet skill shortages-by providing targeted training to workers here at home, and by working with the federal government to bring in skilled, experienced employees from other parts of the world. As part of this strategy, the Province will work closely with agrifood producers and processors to ensure they have access to, and opportunities to benefit from, programs such as the Labour Market Partnerships Program, the Labour Market Solutions Program, the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and the Provincial Nominee Program.

ACTION

- * *Provide targeted support for agrifoods human resource management*
- * *Support agrifood producers to access existing labour market and immigration programs*

Farm succession planning

Like any business, growing food has its share of challenges, including managing financial information, assessing current and future markets, and developing and implementing business, estate and succession plans. As the current generation of farmers gets older, a new generation must be ready and willing to take the reins. And new farmers need support to strengthen their businesses, create jobs and support economic growth. These challenges apply equally to the seafood sector.

ACTION

- * *Support the sector with expert advice, tools and information to support farm succession planning, business growth and diversification*

Keep existing farmland in production

With only a small proportion of the province suitable for farming, B.C. has a vested interest in making sure agricultural land is used to grow food – and that food production is environmentally sustainable, protecting the quality of water, air and soil to ensure opportunities for future generations.

Although there is no legal requirement for owners of ALR land to farm, the Province is exploring a number of innovative ways to encourage agricultural production.

ACTION

- * *Examine the feasibility of setting up a farmlink program connecting farmers to under-utilized land in their communities*
- * *Establish ministry bylaw standards and encourage their adoption by local governments, providing more certainty for agriculture development*
- * *Work with local governments and others to understand why some landowners in the ALR are not farming*
- * *Work with Metro Vancouver to increase the efficient use of agricultural land*

AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM



Courtesy of BC AH

B.C.'s award winning Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation is a non-profit organization that provides schools and students with quality educational resources, programs and information that highlight agriculture as an important part of our economy and way of life. Supported by the Ministries of Agriculture, Education and Health and a cross-section of agrifoods producers, the foundation offers everything from school fruit and vegetable nutrition programs, *Take A Bite of BC* and *Spuds in Tubs*.

Helping students learn about agriculture encourages better food choices. It also builds support for the agrifoods sector and, over the long-term, contributes to its sustainability. For more on the Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, go to <http://www.aafc.ca/bc/>

PROVIDE A SUSTAINABLE LAND BASE FOR PRODUCTION

Protecting the agricultural land base

Only a small percentage of B.C.'s total area is suitable for farming. Since the 1970s, this limited base has been protected by the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), which is administered by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).

A formal review of the ALR/ALC was presented to the government in November, 2010 and the Province has moved forward to address its recommendations. In 2011, the government amended the enabling legislation, improving the Commission's ability to preserve farmland and encourage farming. Actions in this area build on these legislative improvements to support the long-term sustainability of farming in B.C.

ACTION

- * Increase utilization of ALR Crown land for agriculture
- * Work with the ALC to strategically manage ALR lands, preserve farmland and encourage farming through measures such as targeted boundary reviews
- * Provide transitional funding to support the ALC to shift toward a more sustainable business model

Ensuring access to water for farming

Although it is renewable, water – like land – is in high demand in British Columbia. Water-use restrictions have become a common practice in many communities, especially in summer when rainfall is scarce and demand for water increases. Province-wide, water resources are almost fully allocated in highly-populated areas, and action is needed to ensure that agriculture gets a fair share. At the same time, flooding and poor drainage results in costly crop losses whereas good drainage can improve the productivity of agricultural soils.

The Province is working with industry to establish an Agricultural Water Reserve, similar to the Agricultural Land Reserve. As a first step, the B.C. and federal governments have invested \$2 million to develop an Agriculture Water Demand Model to determine current and future needs, property by property. The model is already being used in watersheds.

Over the next several years, its use will expand to the Fraser Valley, Metro Vancouver, Vancouver Island and the Thompson region in the near future. Meantime, the Province will continue to work with the BC Agriculture Council and others to advance work towards a water reserve.

ACTION

- * Continue development of the Agriculture Water Demand Model that will be used to establish current and future agricultural water needs
- * In collaboration with industry, establish principles for an Agricultural Water Reserve

Diversify production in agroforestry

Agroforestry brings together the planned management of trees and shrubs with crop and livestock production. It opens the door to product diversification and generates both short-term and long-term economic benefits, while protecting the environment. Agroforestry systems can also be used as buffers to address rural/urban issues, protect environmental values and for economic diversification in pine beetle affected areas.

ACTION

- * Diversify production on agricultural land by supporting agroforestry through measures such as applied research to improve the quality and marketability of B.C. agroforestry products
- * Implement an agroforestry (silvopasture) pilot in southern B.C.



TARGETS ON THE PATH TO SUCCESS

Goals and Actions	Targets
ENSURE A SAFE SECURE FOOD SUPPLY	
1. Ensuring full traceability for livestock and seafood	
✓ Support implementation of a traceability system for B.C. livestock and a pilot for B.C. seafood	Ongoing
✓ Implement a premise identification system to support traceability for livestock and poultry	December 2012
2. Developing a new animal health framework	
✓ Develop new animal health framework	September 2012
✓ Develop targeted disease control programs	7 programs per year
3. Enhancing Food Safety	
✓ Fund the food industry to continuously improve food safety practices	500 projects by April 2013
ADVANCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS AND PROCESSES	
4. Developing a sector wide innovation strategy	
✓ Finalize the B.C. Strategy for Innovation in Agriculture	December 2012
✓ Increase innovation capacity in the B.C. Agrifoods sector	Ongoing
5. Adding value from farm to fork	
✓ Work with industry to identify new value chain opportunities and share value chain information	Ongoing
✓ Help industry take advantage of new and emerging consumer trends	Ongoing
6. Enhancing organic market access	
✓ Increase organic sector capacity in value chains in order to capitalize on market opportunities	Ongoing
STRENGTHEN DOMESTIC MARKETS	
7. Promoting B.C. foods	
✓ Promote local foods in partnership with industry and other organizations, including the Ministries of Health, Education and Jobs Tourism and Innovation	October 2012
✓ Work with industry to develop a new promotional campaign for B.C. beef	Ongoing
8. Expanding the Seafood Market Exchange	
✓ Finalize development of the Seafood Market Exchange	September 2012

Goals and Actions	Targets
9. Building BC Agrifoods Connections	
✓ Enable the agrifoods sector to build their business through new web based technologies	March 2017
10. Expanding opportunities for B.C. wine	
✓ Work to ensure that consumers across Canada can access wines from all producing regions of our province	Ongoing
✓ Investigate co-marketing opportunities between sectors (e.g., seafood and wine)	October 2012
EXPAND INTERNATIONAL MARKETS	
11: Building export market readiness	
✓ Deliver export readiness seminars*	7 seminars by March 2013
✓ Improve export market intelligence*	Deliver 4 reports to industry per year
✓ Support industry associations to provide outreach on market trends, processing and commercialization infrastructure	Ongoing
✓ Capitalize on unique transportation requirements for B.C. agrifoods exports, as part of the expanding Canada Pacific Gateway	December 2012
12. Leading trade missions	
✓ Lead a Trade Mission to Asia in the fall of 2012	November 2012
✓ Support outbound and incoming trade and buyers' missions	4 per year, ongoing
✓ Finalize market access issues for beef and cherries	Ongoing
13. Promoting B.C. products abroad	
✓ Support B.C. companies at international seafood shows	3 shows by May 2013
✓ Continue the campaign to expand domestic and international markets for berries	November 2012
✓ Identify export opportunities for B.C. wines, including the Wines of BC marketing campaign with the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation	March 2013
✓ Ensure that there are B.C. agrifoods trade specialists in international offices in key markets	December 2012
GROW B.C.'S AGRIFOODS ADVANTAGE	
14. Enhancing sector competitiveness	
✓ Establish a competitiveness committee with a mandate to report to the Minister of Agriculture within one year from its first meeting	Report due June 2013
✓ Develop a target for profitability in the Agrifoods sector	December 2012
✓ Increase production efficiency for product processing and distribution	2 projects by March 2014
✓ Provide relief for farm property tax by reviewing farm assessment policies	December 2013
✓ Work with the Federal Government to add four new vegetable commodities under the Acreage Loss Program	April 2012

Goals and Actions	Targets
15. Minimizing regulatory barriers to growth	
✓ Complete the regulatory review of the ranching sector	December 2012
✓ Complete the regulatory review of the tree fruit sector	December 2012
✓ Provide relief to offset the cost of the carbon tax and act on opportunities identified in the BC Jobs Plan Greenhouse Sector Special Report	December 2012
16. Address the sector's labour-market needs	
✓ Provide targeted support for agrifoods human resource management	Publish HR handbook by June 2012
✓ Support agrifood producers to access existing labour market and immigration programs	Ongoing
SECURE A STRONG FUTURE FOR FARMING	
17. Farm succession planning	
✓ Support the sector with expert advice, tools and information to support farm succession planning, business growth and diversification	300 clients per year
18. Keeping existing farmland in production	
✓ Examine the feasibility of setting up a farmlink program connecting farmers to under-utilized land in their communities	September 2012
✓ Establish ministry bylaw standards and encourage their adoption by local governments, providing more certainty for agriculture development	Complete 2 by November 2012
✓ Work with local governments and others to understand why some landowners in the ALR are not farming	Ongoing
✓ Work with Metro Vancouver to increase the efficient use of agricultural land	December 2012
PROVIDE A SUSTAINABLE LAND BASE FOR PRODUCTION	
19. Protecting the agricultural land base	
✓ Increase the utilization of Crown land within the ALR	Establish baselines by 2015
✓ Work with the ALC to strategically manage ALR lands, preserve farmland and encourage farming	Ongoing
✓ Provide transitional funding to support the ALC to shift toward a more sustainable business model	Until March 2013
20. Ensuring access to water for farming	
✓ Continue development of the Agriculture Water Demand Model that will be used to establish current and future agricultural water needs	Three new Land Use Inventories completed by March 2013
✓ In collaboration with industry, establish principles for an Agricultural Water Reserve	December 2012
21. Diversify production in agroforestry	
✓ Diversify production on agricultural land by supporting agroforestry through measures such as applied research to improve the quality and marketability of B.C. agroforestry products	Ongoing
✓ Implement an agroforestry (silvopasture) pilot in southern B.C.	March 2013

This strategy sets the stage for a healthy, growing agrifoods sector.

And it's a good start. But we want to hear from you. What's working well in your community? What more could government do? And how can we all work together more effectively to help this important sector thrive? Share your ideas and join the conversation on the BC Jobs Plan website at <http://bcjobsplan.com/>







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